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REMARKS

ON

Dr. *WELLS*

HIS

LETTER

TO

Mr. Peter Dowley.

*In a Letter to a Friend.
By James Peirce.*

The Second Edition.

Edward Harwood

L O N D O N,

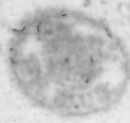
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REMARKS

ON

THE

LETTER



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S I R,

I Now send you my Remarks upon the Letter you were pleas'd to leave with me. My Curiosity had been indeed gratify'd before with the Perusal of some part of it in the Bookellers Shop; so much, I remember, as satisfy'd me that the Dissenters were not like to gain much Conviction, or suffer much Prejudice by the Arguments of the Author. The Account you gave me of the great Industry and the mighty Boastings wherewith it has been dispers'd, has, I confess, made me willing to give it a more serious Perusal than I design'd, and to bestow some Remarks upon the Arguments in it, which I must own I thought deserv'd none, as I remember I said to a Friend who told me, that Mr. D. design'd not to bestow any upon it.

His Prefatory Discourse I shall pass over, being willing to allow every Man his Liberty, to discharge his Duty according to the Light of his own Conscience; my Design is to shew that the Doctor has mistaken the Dissenters.

His Letter consists of two parts, the first of which is design'd to shew that the Non-conformist Ministers are false Teachers, upon the Account of the false Doctrine taught by them. And the Doctor has here singled out eleven particular Instances of false Doctrine taught by them.

But I desire the Reader to observe, that some of them are such as the Dissenters do not teach, and therein the Doctor entertains his Reader with Calumnies instead of Arguments. In others he represents not fairly the Dissenters Sense, but sets down a little part of what they say, and the rest is what he thinks he is best able to Refute; and withal, his Instances are in things so very far from being essential to Religion, that a Person would not deserve to be reputed a false Teacher for the sake of them. It is not every little Error that's sufficient to denominate the Man that teaches it, in Gross, a false Teacher; the Denomination among such fallible Creatures as we are, is to be made, *a Majori*, and little doubtful Disputations should be over-look'd. When I see a Man so unmercifully lay about him, and condemn every one that is

perhaps guilty of a mistake in things of little moment, he seems to me to forget that he's a Man, and so liable to mistake, and looks as if he affected the Air of his Holiness, and were setting up for Infallibility, at least in *Cathedra*, and to assume to himself the final decision of Controversies. I confess the least trifling Mistake in a Person's Doctrine will, according to the rigour of the words, bespeak him a false Teacher, that is, so far. But Mens common Circumstances have taught the World so much Civility, as not to bestow this odious Character upon one another, where the Mistake is not of some considerable importance and moment. And truly without this Civility, I fear the Doctor, notwithstanding his Assurance, must come into the number of false Teachers, even for his Misrepresentations of the Dissenters. Nor can he have good reason to think, that he shall be able to do the Church of *England* any Service by this way of arguing. It will certainly cast reproach upon a considerable number of Conformists. There are many things controverted among themselves, and one side or other must certainly at this Rate be false Teachers. The Doctrine of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance is either true or false; if true, a great number of the Conformists were false Teachers at the Revolution, and continue so ever since; if false, the generality of them were false Teachers before. I might instance in the *Calvinist* and *Arminian* Doctrines, or the most important Controversy lately started about the Rights of a Convocation, and the Power of adjourning the Lower House. These Disputes would furnish us with a brave List of false Teachers, and perhaps few Conformists could wholly escape: If they were found Orthodox in one, yet they might prove Heterodox in another Controversy, and so must be false Teachers. Now I shall proceed to the Doctor's Instances, and in alledging them I shall first set down his Assertion (that the Reader may see what's his Design) and then his Arguments from which he draws it.

(1.) His first Assertion is, *That whosoever shall teach that kneeling is not a Posture very suitable and proper for Prayer, but a piece of Superstition, he is justly to be condemn'd as a false Teacher.*

The Reader may see here, it is for his ease we set down the Conclusion first, for that saves us the labour of examining his Arguments. We own the Conclusion, and then what need of Arguments to prove it to us? It is the common practice of Dissenters to use this Posture in Prayer in their Families,

Families, and I verily believe in their Closets. They own it is a very proper Posture in Prayer: But the Examples we have in Scripture of another Posture in Prayer, I mean standing, satisfies them that the other is not absolutely necessary, and therefore they prefer the first, and only practise the latter when most convenient; and if I mistake not, the Church-men as well as Dissenters judge both proper, and act accordingly.

I know no way to excuse the Doctor here, since the Error he opposes is not held by any of the Dissenters, I think not by the Quakers themselves; and if he is a false Teacher that is guilty of any little Mistake, I desire the Doctor to consider what he is that notoriously prevaricates to render his Neighbour odious.

(2.) His 2d Assertion, is, *That whosoever teaches the using Forms of Prayer, is not most highly acceptable to God, or less acceptable than, or not equally acceptable as, New, or Extempore Prayer, is a false Teacher.*

While the Doctor lays down this Assertion in opposition to the Dissenters, he runs into several Mistakes about their Judgment, which it is fit we should correct, before we consider his Arguments.

1. He represents the Dissenters, as thinking Prayer acceptable to God upon the account of its being *Extempore*, which is not the Opinion of any of us that I know. The Dissenters think that Prayer is most acceptable to God, which is offer'd in the Name of Christ, by a Pure Heart, and with devout and suitable Affections: They do not think conceiv'd Prayer will be acceptable without these Qualifications, or that praying by a Form will be unacceptable when thus qualified.

2. They don't think that a Form of Prayer is absolutely unlawful. I speak now of the Generality of Dissenters (and some few weak Persons in any Party are not to be made the Standard) who teach their Children Forms of Prayer (which they would not do if this were their opinion) and who advise others to them that are not able to do without them.

And I desire the Doctor to take notice that the Assembly of Divines have asserted the same thing concerning the Lord's Prayer, that he himself do's, who not only call it a Form of Prayer, but expressly say, that it is not only for Direction as a Pattern, according to which we are to make our other Prayers, but may also be us'd as a

*Larger Catechism,
p. 146. compare the
Directory of Prayer
after Sermon.*

Prayer ; and they argue this by comparing the two Texts alledg'd by the Doctor.

3. As to the Comparifon between thefe two ways of Praying, tho there is fome Diverfity of Opinions among the Difsenters, yet they generally agree herein, that as to themfelves, they find conceiv'd Prayer do's more engage their attention to the Bufinefs they are about ; and that fince this is a very lawful Help againit thofe wandring thoughts, to which we are all fo prone in that Duty, they cannot fee any reafon why they fhould not have their Liberty. They add too, that as our Defires are the chief things in our Prayers, they think they may as well lead as follow our words ; and that it is as proper when we have to do with God, who looks moft to our Hearts in that Duty, that it fhould be out of the abundance of our Hearts that our Mouths fhould utter the Words wherewith we clothe our Requests, as that our Hearts fhould defire out of the abundance of the Words that are put into our Mouths ; and as they think this a Reafon for the Ufe of conceiv'd Prayer in private, fo the fame will hold as to the Perfon that officiates in publick ; and that it will not a little affect the Auditory, upon whom the vifible Difpofition of the Speaker has no fmall Influence, and whole Affections in a great meafure follow his. For he is moft likely to have his Auditory ferioufly affected either in Preaching or Praying, with or without a Form, that is moft fo himfelf. They add, That in Publick Prayers, the Auditory's not knowing before-hand the Prayers which are offer'd, is a means to engage their Attention, and to help againft the Evil mention'd before ; and that there is good Reafon for the ufe of Conceiv'd Prayer, becaufe no Form can be fo contriv'd as to reach all Cafes.

4. But the main difference between the Conformifts and Non-Conformifts is this, that the former do pretend to a Power of impofing a Form of Prayer upon all the worfhipping Affemblies of this Nation ; and the other do defire to fee a fair Proof that Chrift has lodg'd fuch a Power as this in them. They profefs they have not as yet been able to meet with any fuch thing, tho fome of them have made a diligent fearch after it ; and withal, they can't efteem the Form impos'd, the moft exactly fitted to anfwer its end.

Now having thus fet the Difsenters Opinion in a true Light, let us fee how far his Arguments will affect them ; *Not to mention* (fays he) *feveral Forms of Prayer (or the like) prefcrib'd by God himfelf in the Old Testament, 'tis evident from the New, &c.* and I am well fatisfy'd with the Doctor's not mentioning thefe

these Forms, for these two Reasons ; (1.) Because it is dubious whether there be any Form of Publick Prayer (strictly so call'd) prescrib'd in the Old Testament. (2.) If there were such, it would not signify much in our Controversy, because there is no dispute whether God may, if he please, impose Forms of Prayer ; but the only Question is, Whether he has empower'd Men to do it ? and I suppose the Doctor will not infer the latter from the former.

Passing therefore these Forms, he comes to the New Testament, and argues from the Lord's Prayer, and cites *Matt. 6. 9. Luke 11. 2.* and then he adds, *And that it was our Saviour's Design that this Form should be used as long as Christianity it self lasted in this World, is plain, from his limiting no time after which the Use of this Prayer should cease, and be no longer requisite ; but on the contrary expressing himself indefinitely, and without any Limitation : thus Luke 11. 2. When, i. e. whensoever (for the Greek word is the Indefinite Particle ὅταν whensoever) or in whatever Period of Time, or Age of the World ye Pray, Say, Our Father which art, &c.*

For my own part, I am satisfy'd, it may be us'd as a Form, and do believe the Dissenters will generally grant that, as any other proper Scripture-Expressions ; so these of the Lord's Prayer, all of them, and as they stand, may be us'd in Prayer. But that which I would remark upon the Doctor's Words, now I have told him my own Opinion, is, 1. That 'tis a Disservice to Truth for a Person to set it on a weak Foundation ; this tempts Persons to question it, who before perhaps inclin'd to embrace it. Now this I think the Doctor does, when he lays so much stress upon the indefinite Particle ὅταν, without a Limitation of Time ; I will only propose to the Doctor a Parallel way of Reasoning : Suppose therefore that a Man should argue from *Luke 12. 11. and Matt. 10. 19.* that whenever a Person is persecuted for his Religion, and is to appear before a Magistrate, it is a Sin for him to premeditate Defence, and that he's bound to depend on the immediate inspiration of the Spirit, and that because the indefinite article ὅταν is made use of in both places. I ask then, Would the Doctor allow the Argument ? I fancy he would as much dislike this as *Extempore* Prayer or Preaching. 'Twere easy to give more Instances of this Nature. 'Tis a plain Case then, that when there is no express Limitation set down, yet there may be one sufficiently imply'd in the Circumstances, and the nature of the Thing. As here, when Inspiration ceas'd, certainly this Precept can't be suppos'd to bind ; and there-

fore, 2. The Doctor should have prov'd, That there are no such Circumstances as may be reasonably suppos'd to imply a Limitation. I will only put him in mind of one Circumstance which perhaps some may be ready to alledge. The Occasion of Christ's teaching his Disciples may serve for this; they were at first raw and ignorant, and so might have special need of being taught thus to Pray, and therefore the Doctor should shew, that even when the Reason assign'd for the teaching them this Prayer at first ceas'd, that yet they were bound to the use of it. 3. I would ask the Doctor, who has giv'n him Authority to restrain this indefinite Particle *ὅταν*, and to enlarge it at pleasure? That is, who has assur'd him that it must extend to every Period of the World, and not to every particular individual time in every such Period, wherein Men pray to God? *i. e.* In short, why should not this Indefinite be equivalent to an Universal? and be as much as this; As often as ye Pray, Say, &c. and then I fear the Doctor and his Friends will not come off handsomly, and we must change the Fashion, and say both before and after Meat a somewhat longer Grace. 4. If the Obligation be so constant, how comes it to pass that through the Acts of the Apostles we find no mention of it, nor in the most early times of Christianity? Particularly, Why have we nothing of this in that most exact Account giv'n us of the Manner and Order of their Worship by *Justin Martyr*, in his 2d *Apolo-*
logy?

In the next place, the Doctor argues from the Example of our Lord in the Garden, *Mat. 26. 44.* who pray'd, saying the same words 3 times; and upon this he likewise grounds his 3d and 4th Instances; and therefore I shall here endeavour distinctly to state this matter. And first we will suppose with the Doctor, That our Lord pray'd these 3 times by a Form, or rather the first *Extempore*, and made that *Extempore* Prayer a Form in the two latter, and that he us'd every time exactly the same words; and, I say, this won't make much to our present Controversy, for the clearing of which I desire the Reader to observe,

1. If it be inferr'd from hence, That a Form is not in itself unlawful, and when offer'd up with suitable Affection is pleasing to God (as it will yield this Remark understood in his way) the thing inferr'd is granted by us, and therefore he need not prove it.

2. Our Lord's Circumstances were every time the same, and so the same words might well suit each time, where

our Circumstances so continually vary, that no Form can be
 suppos'd always to suit them; and therefore to argue from
 what our Lord did then, to what we should do constantly, is
 not fair.

3. As the time between each Prayer was very short, and the
 Circumstances of our Lord the same, and his Affections the
 same in each, it is no great wonder that he should use the
 same Expressions; and so we say, that it would be a vain and
 simple Humour for a Person in praying about a Matter in all
 its Circumstances exactly the same, to be scrupulous about
 using any Expressions, merely because he had us'd them in
 another Prayer before.

4. Our Lord's Prayer was his own, and so of Divine Com-
 position; and surely it can't hence be argued, that I am bound
 to use a Form of another Man's making, who can't pretend
 to such an Original.

5. I desire it may be observ'd, that there was not the same
 Reason for our Lord's not tying up himself to a Form, that
 there may be why we should not. If we find that the con-
 stant use of a Form gives more Liberty and Scope to our
 Thoughts to wander, and therefore as a lawful means to help
 us against it, we prefer conceiv'd Prayer to humane Forms, yet
 far be it from us to imagine our Spotless Perfect Redeemer,
 subject to the same Evil with our selves, or to stand in any
 need of the like Remedy.

And thus having giv'n an Answer to him upon his own
 Supposition; I shall a little debate the Matter, whether it be
 reasonable to allow this Supposition, That our Lord us'd
 every time the same Form of words; and I shall comprehend
 what I have to say here in these following Remarks.

(1.) That 'tis very probable our Lord was each time a
 considerable while in Prayer, and that the account the Evan-
 gelists have giv'n us of his Prayer, is not of the very Words
 and Syllables, but only of the Matter and Substance of it. I
 cannot easily think that our Lord, who on other Occasions
 spent whole Nights in Prayer, did upon this extraordinary Oc-
 casion, when he was so deeply affected, and his Soul was ex-
 ceeding Sorrowful, even unto Death, content himself with
 so short a time in Prayer, as must be suppos'd, unless this
 Account be allow'd. I appeal for this to Circumstances;
 Who can think that our Lord should three times successively
 find every one of his Disciples asleep, upon his leaving them
 only for 2 or 3 Minutes? and supposing we have all his Pray-
 er, it could not be much more; for he went but a little way
 from

from them, as all agree ; he went forward a little, say both *Matthew* and *Mark* : and *Luke* expresses it more clearly, about a Stones Cast. And besides, add to this, what *Luke* has advanced, and it is yet more clear, that more time must be allowed, *Luke* 22. 43, 44. *And there appeared to him an Angel, and strengthened him : And being in an Agony he prayed more earnestly : And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling upon the ground.* Certainly this will shew that the Evangelists have only given us a Summary Account of his Prayer.

(2.) The Evangelists, tho' they all agree in the Sense and Matter of his Prayer, yet set it down with such a difference of Expression, as shews they design'd not to give us an exact Account of his very Words : In *St. Matthew* it is thus ; *O my father if it be possible let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.* In *St. Mark*, *Abba father, all things are possible unto thee, take this cup from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And in *St. Luke*, *If thou be willing, remove this cup from me ; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.*

(3.) If our Lord us'd a Form of Prayer, that is, us'd the very same Words and Expressions, then he must do so all the three times (according to the Doctor's Argument, and as he allows) for the Evangelist said he pray'd the third time, saying the same words ; and *St. Mark* says of the second time, that he said the same words that he had said the first. But this can't be, for this very plain Reason, because the same Evangelist has set down his words the first and second time differently.

The first time thus ; *O my father if it be possible let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt :* And the second time thus ; *O my father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.* This Difference may be easily accounted for according to my Notion, but not according to the Doctor's.

(4.) As to those words (which the Doctor insists on; and which is the only Objection against this Interpretation) *τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον εἰπὼν*, which are us'd by two Evangelists, and we have render'd, *saying the same words* ; we may render them, *saying the same thing*. So we have render'd that word elsewhere, *ἑωτίσω ὑμᾶς κατὰ λόγον ἓνα*, *I Matth. 21. 24. also will ask you one thing.* It is certain that *Luke* 20. 3. the word *כבר* which signifies primarily a word, is put often to signify a thing ; and the

both the 70 Interpreters, when 'tis us'd so, have often render'd it about *ῥῆμα & λόγος*. For this latter, among many other Instances, see 1 Kings 12. 30. Deut. 1. 32. and in this use of the word, I think it is evident the Evangelists have here imitated them; besides that, other Authors would bear them out in it.

His 3d and 4th Instances (as I observ'd before) are grounded upon the same Text, and have nothing in them that needs any farther Answer.

(5.) In his next instance, he is still establishing the same Assertion, but his Argument is taken from Eccles. 5. 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God.* From whence the Doctor argues, that one who prays by a Form, is secur'd against Rashness, as he may consider before-hand of every word; but he that prays without a Form, is not sufficiently secur'd from any Accidents, so disturbing him, as to make him let fall rash or hasty words or Expressions; and therefore he asserts, *That he that prays by a Form, prays in such a manner as enables him to pray more agreeably to the Rule above-mentioned.* In answer to which,

1. Let us try how far the Doctor's Argument will go; for 'tis a pity it should not run out to its full length. His Argument condemns plainly all those that use conceiv'd Prayer, as rash and hasty; or at least as sinning in not using means to be sufficiently secur'd against it; which I take to be a Man's Duty.

Now this Consequence falls hard upon the primitive Christians, all Protestants, and even upon the Church of England herself, who allows this way of praying, and many of whose Ministers, without any Disturbance, practise it.

And I will tell the Reader what I have from a person of good Credit, that a certain Bishop now living in Ireland, when pleading for Forms of Prayer, was yet pleas'd to say, that in private he was against Persons tying themselves up to them; and that if he were assur'd of a Person, that he never pray'd but by a Form, he should very much doubt his Sincerity; and therefore in the Family where he then was, he us'd conceiv'd prayer.

2. Let us imitate the Doctor's way of Reasoning, and try if we can't with more Strength argue from the practice of our Lord. If Christ had thought with the Doctor, that conceiv'd Prayer was rash and hasty, he would have forbidden it, or have left no room for it, either by providing himself, or by

Free Mr.
Postscript
to p. 7.
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by his Apostles Forms of prayer for all Cases; or by letting know that he had left a power to some certain persons to draw up Forms for his Worship, or by commanding all persons to draw up Forms for themselves, and then constantly to use them; but since he has not done any thing of this Nature, we have no Reason to think that our Lord had any such Apprehension.

3. Rashness in Prayer does not always lie in the Words and Syllables made use of, but sometimes in the Requests themselves, and the peremptoriness of asking, &c. If a person asks things not according to the Mind and Will of God, but not with due Reserve and Submission to the Will of God, he may be said to be rash; but that a Request must necessarily be rash, that is not form'd into an exact Period, is what I feel no reason to believe. If the Doctor please, he may call it so, but he must give me leave to think that God, who looks chiefly at the Heart, judges very differently of it. The Apostle speaks of such Prayer as consisted so much in Desires, as to want Expressions, *Rom. 8. 26, 27.* (and I hope that was not by a Form) and yet he assures us that 'tis acceptable to God; and I can't devise what should induce a learned Man to give such a new and strange Account of that Text, and to make the Holy Spirit our Intercessor at the Right Hand of God, and so confound his Work with that of our Redeemer, unless it were his Jealousie that the common Interpretation, according to the received Notions of the Work of Christ, and of the Spirit, might have too kind an Aspect on conceiv'd Prayer. But his Interpretation is so forc'd, that 'tis no wonder he has had few to follow him in it. And indeed that the serving an Hypothesis was the Reason of his giving that Interpretation, will not seem improbable to him, who considers that when he is not thus biased, he acknowledges with the Generality of Protestant Writers, that Christ is the only Intercessor with the Father. See *Col. 2. 19.* I will add, That God has let us know, that that Exactness of Speech, which is so highly esteem'd among Men, is not of the same account with him, even by the Style in which the New Testa-

Vide Gatakerum de Novi Testamenti stilo, contra Pfochenium.

ment (or a great part of it to be sure) is written, which, as Learned Men have observed, is far from having that Exactness and Accuracy which is to be met with in other Authors. I am not, however, pleading for a careless and slovenly Expression, which tends only to bring the Worship of God into Contempt. But this is what I assert, that the Doctor has carry'd the matter too far, and that 'tis not a difficult thing for a Person to arrive to this, to be able to put his Desires into apt Expressions. And I query whe-

Whether the Doctor thinks a Man more fit to make a Minister than a Solicitor, that has not a tolerable Ability this way?

4. Since the Doctor says, He that uses a Form *may through-weigh afore-hand what he is to utter in his Prayer, and so may assure to use no single word that may be stil'd rash or hasty, or by other way indecent*; I suppose he will allow, that when he is thus weigh'd the Matter, and finds any thing of this nature in the Form he is to use, that he should first alter it. His weighing it will be to little purpose otherwise: and what then would the Doctor have a Non-conformist do, that has weigh'd the Establish'd Form, and declares, that according to his best judgment, he finds many things of this Nature?

5. The Text that the Doctor argues from, does relate to Vows, and not to Prayer. How mischievous rash Vows are, may be seen by *Jephthah*: And it is certain that they are not to be made but with the greatest Care and Deliberation; and it is a great Argument of Weakness, for Persons upon every sudden Motion, without such care, to make Vows: and this we may argue from what follows, for the wise Man enforces this Rule by a Reason in the 3d Verse: *For a Dream cometh through the multitude of Business, and a fools voice is known by a multitude of words.* Where he compares rash and a foolish Vow to a Dream: *Easily made, as a Dream, is a loose Thought that comes into the Mind hurried with Business, without considering the Nature of the thought; so a rash Vow is made without a distinct and prudent weighing of Matters; and as it is easily made, so it is little regarded and as soon forgotten as a Dream.* He therefore expressly speaks of Vows in the next Verses; *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools.* (Such Fools as are describ'd before, whose Voice in Vowing is like their Thoughts in Dreaming.) *Pay that which thou hast vow'd: Better it is, that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou should vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the Angel that it was an Error. Wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thy hands:* (and then he repeats his former Reason again) *For in the multitudes of dreams and many words* (that is, a Forwardness and Hastiness in Vowing) *there are also divers vanities, but fear thou God.* Now as the Repetition of this reason in the 7th Verse shews that the 4th, 5th, and 6th Verses about Vows do belong to what went before, and are to be connected with the 3d,

Bp. Patrick in his Annotations, speaking of Prayer and Vows, says the latter is most proper to the place.

to the 3d Verse is connected with the 2d; and is a reason for it; and therefore the 2d Verse relates not to Prayer in general, but to Vows.

His 6th Assertion is, *That whosoever teaches that Preaching within-book, is of it self less efficacious or edifying than Preaching without-book (in short) is a false Teacher.*

For my part, I never doubted of the Lawfulness of Preaching within-book, and the Dissenters are so far from judging the Doctor represents, that every Man uses his Liberty; and many of them Preach within-book. I think all considerate Persons will easily agree with the Account which my Lord Bp. of Sarum, in his Pastoral Care, gives of this Matter. Certainly it is lawful and useful, where it is done well, and renders a Person more acceptable to his Auditory. But the Doctor's Argument being new and singular, comes now to be consider'd, and it is this; *Jerem. 36. 4, 5, 6. Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, &c. From whence he infers, That the Wisdom of God judg'd it equally efficacious to declare his Will by reading it out of a Book, as to declare it by word of Mouth, which being put into the present way of speaking, is as much as to say, that the Wisdom of God judg'd it equally edifying to read a Sermon, or Preach within-book, as to Preach without-book. For 'tis evident that the Divine Goodness was desirous to bring the Jews to a sincere and timely Repentance, from the 3d and 7th Verses; and therefore 'tis but rational to suppose, That the Divine Goodness was willing to make use of the most efficacious ordinary Method to this great End and Purpose. Wherefore had the Divine Wisdom known that delivering his Will by word of Mouth, or Preaching without-book is a Method much more efficacious and edifying, than delivering his Will, or Preaching within-book; It is not to be suppos'd but that the Providence of God either would have so order'd Matters as that the Prophet Jeremiah himself should have deliver'd his Message by word of Mouth, or else have order'd and enabled Baruch to have so deliver'd it, and not to have read it out of a Book. Doubtless the Reader is now fully convinc'd of the pestilent Heresie of these Dissenters, and for ever fortify'd against all Danger from the Doctrine of these false Teachers. Such an Argument better deserves a place in the Reasons of the Contempt of the Clergy, than a serious Answer. But to shew the weakness of it, let these things be consider'd.*

1. That his way of Arguing is fallacious. I mean, when he argues from the Divine Goodness, what God must necessarily do. The Divine Goodness, tho' it be infinite, does not always

ways to the utmost exert it self; There are Reasons that are not able oftentimes to penetrate, why it does not. God's Goodness towards Man in his state of Innocency, and his willingness that he should be happy, are unquestionable; and yet we see we can't argue, that he must therefore do every thing he might have done, if he pleas'd to prevent his Misery, or that he must necessarily hinder the Devil from tempting him to Sin. Or to put the Matter a little closer; God is not willing that *any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. Will the Doctor therefore argue, That he uses the most efficacious and edifying ordinary means, to this end, with those that have not, as well with those that have the Light of the Gospel? It is a presumption for Men to go about to define how far God's Goodness will engage and oblige him to his Creatures, where he is not himself express'd it in his Word.

2. God had before sent his Message to them by his Prophet *Jeremiah*, and they had put him in Prison for it: And when they dealt so barbarously with his Servant, was it not reasonable, he should forbear to work a Miracle to set his Prophet at liberty to speak to them himself, and that he should deny the immediate Inspiration that was necessary to enable *Baruch* to speak without-book, supposing this the most efficacious means? Will the Doctor say, That the Divine Goodness always engages him to use the most efficacious means, if any at all? or will he not allow God gradually to withhold his hand upon Mens provocations?

3. Let it but be consider'd, what may be reasonably thought to be the Cause of God's thus ordering these things to be written; and it's plainly this, That whereas they had been displeas'd with the Prophet for declaring these things (for he only wrote what he had preach'd before, as appears by *ver. 2.* whence I cou'd argue as finely as the Doctor in this matter, if we were of his Humour) and thought to save themselves the trouble of hearing of them, by shutting up the Prophet in prison; God disappointed them, and orders his Prophet to write these so displeasing things, which was not only that *Baruch* might read them, but that they might read them themselves also; *vid. ver. 21.* and not only so, but that being written, they might remain as a Memorial against them; and therefore after the Roll was read and burn'd, God orders another Roll to be written, *v. 27.* Let the Words of God by *Isaiah* be compar'd herewith, *Ch. 30. 8.* Now *write it before them in a Table, and note it in a Book, that it may*

may be for the time to come, for ever ; That this is a rebellion People, &c. So that here is no more than what is ordinary God deliver'd his Mind and Will by the Preaching, and the by the Writings of the Prophet. But in my Apprehension, the Doctor would make any use of this Text to such a kind of purpose, he shou'd rather have argued, That since Goodness inclin'd God to use the most efficacious means with the People ; and at the same time he did not so order Matters by his Providence, That the Prophet should deliver his Message himself, but only by Proxy, That therefore 'tis as efficacious and edifying a way for a Minister to preach by Proxy as to preach himself, and consequently that the Doctor may as well edifie his Parish, by sending his Clerk with a Copy of his Sermon, as by preaching himself ; which wou'd be a pretty Device for the ease and profit of our Modern Pluralists, whom I hope a Man may speak against without incurring the Censure of a false Teacher.

In the next place the Doctor is pleas'd to make a Reflection on the Introducers of this way of conceiv'd Prayer : But we thank him, we are able to give a better Account of the Matter, than the doughty Author he refers to. The Doctor's Story is, *That one Cummin a Popish Friar in the 9th of Queen Eliz. (in order to draw off the People from the Church of England, and so to further the Ends of Popery) began to make use of the Artifice of Extempore Prayer. And afterwards another Thomas Heath follow'd the same crafty Method, and for both these we are referr'd to the very Canonical and Apostolical Author Mr. Foxe's and Firebrand's.* But in answer to the Doctor, and all those (who are not a few) who appeal to that Author, I say,

(1.) That we are secure of a much better Pattern : We have Patterns not only in the Old Testament, but in the New the Apostles ; and we have the Example of the most primitive Christians to plead in our behalf, and we are willing to stand and fall with these ; and despise the impotent Malice of those who Slander us as receiving it from Cummin.

(2.) 'Tis strange that Cummin should begin this in England in the 9th of Queen Eliz. when the insufficiency of Forms had taught and constrain'd persons to the use of it before, as may be seen in the Cases of the Martyrs ; particularly Dr. Taylor.

But, (3.) The whole Story is such a notorious Forgery, that no Man can lay stress upon it, without exposing the Reputation of his Judgment or his Honesty. If that piece does

not carry in the Front of it all the Marks of Forgery; farewell all Criticism. And it is not only a Forgery, but a foolishly contriv'd one; and I have often wonder'd that our Enemies (who are subtil enough) should hide the Cheat no better. There is nothing of Consistency in any Circumstances of the Story. I desire the Reader only to peruse what Dr. Collins has wrote on this Subject, in his Answer to Dr. Scot's Cases about Forms of Prayer, who has with so much Evidence prov'd the Forgery and Folly of both these Stories, That I can't but wonder that the Doctor and his Party do not blush to think of the printing, and much more of their so frequent citing such a paultry Imposture, which is not the only Instance of our Enemies using that Artifice against us, which we are however willing to forget, if they please to give us leave. However, as the Doctor appeals to this Author, I desire that when he is at leisure he wou'd take the pains to answer what is there said, or if he can't, that he beg pardon of God and the World for endeavouring to wound the Reputation of his Brethren, by the Testimony of such a notorious Legend, or at least that he alledge it no more.

Next he tells us, *That the Papists preach without-book, and seldom or never within*, which I believe to be true, and no doubt their Reason is, because they judge it the most perswasive way, as I can't but own that, generally speaking, it is.

But then he infers, *That since 'tis a receiv'd Principle among the Dissenters, That 'tis not expedient or good to symbolize or agree with the Papists, in things belonging to Divine Worship; it clearly follows from this their own Principle, that they ought not to have so great an Esteem for Extempore Prayer, or for Preaching without-book, since they have been or are practis'd by the Popish Priests themselves.*

This is only according to the Doctor's way of representing us, from whom we are to expect nothing fair. I hope the Cause is not Wilfulness, but rather such Weakness and Ignorance, as tho' it renders him unfit to write in the Controversie, yet may lessen his Guilt, when he comes to give up his Account.

This that the Doctor with so much assurance says is a receiv'd Principle among us, is rejected by us, as he has represented it.

We utterly deny any Principle that is so silly and foolish, whatever Contempt and Scorn the Doctor may think we deserve upon such an Account: And we might full as fairly say, That the contrary Assertion is held by our Adversaries; and

that it is the receiv'd Principle of the Conformists, that it is expedient or good to symbolize or agree with the Papists in things belonging to Divine Worship.

I put it to the Doctor, whether (as despicable an Opinion as he is pleas'd to entertain of us) he thinks in his Conscience that we are so silly as to believe, that because the Papists use both Methods of Preaching and Praying within and without-book, that therefore we are to use neither? If the Doctor thinks so, let him shew what ground he has from our Writings for this his Opinion. Do's he think that he and his Party are the only Men that know that Satan can transform himself into an Angel of Light? Do's he think that we don't know that it is very possible for them to abuse that which is good, by applying it to a wrong End? Or do's he believe that we think we are thereupon bound to lay aside the thing it self? Our Opinion is like to be better learn'd from a Friend, than an insulting scornful Adversary; and therefore the Reader may take it thus.

1. That we judge that no Man has a Power to add any religious Ceremonies to those that God has already appointed for his Worship. There are some Circumstances that must be determin'd one way or another, or there can be no Worship perform'd, and such are those of Time and Place, &c. And therefore it is necessary that they with whom the Care of God's Worship is lodg'd, and who are to see to it, That the General Rules relating thereto be fulfilled, should fix and settle these: That is, that every particular Church have a Power to order these things, so they do it to Edification. But when Men enjoin religious Ceremonies, let them be Protestants or Papists, we think that our Lord will bear us out in refusing to obey them, for which we Appeal to the former part of the 15th of *Matthew*, which we think to be greatly Parallel to our Case: and that wherein it differs, it renders our Case yet the more clear and plain. For our Lord himself determines

Mat. 23. 2. the Matter; *That the Scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses seat; and adds, All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, (i. e. all that they enjoin from the Law of Moses, all that they fairly urge from the Law of God; for otherwise our Lord could not have vindicated his Disciples in the 15th Chap. as he did) but we deny the Power of a Convocation to make Laws for all worshipping Assemblies,* and we find that the Conformists themselves,

† *Reflect. on a* (as particularly the Bishop of *Sarum* †) give up the Divine Right of a Convocation; and yet farther than that can be pleaded; I don't see a Convocation. how we can be oblig'd by their Determinations.

Again

Again, the Ceremony impos'd, was that which was indifferent to be sure in it self; nothing cou'd be more so, than the washing the hands before Meat; but we say that 'tis quite otherwise in some Matters in dispute between us: As particularly the Sign of the Cross.

2. We say that the Church of *Rome* is, and for several Ages has been, idolatrous, and is certainly the most corrupt and impure Communion of any in the World. The Conformists have quarrell'd with us about several things, which we think unlawful, wherein we desir'd to be left to our Liberty, and which we can't devise what Reason they have to retain, unless it be a vain Humour of pleasing the Papists by some kind of Conformity to them. At this, we own, we are not a little surpriz'd, and think that a thing shou'd not be esteem'd the better for coming from them, but is rather to be look'd on as the more suspicious; and we think that the same Reason that induc'd our Reformers to lay aside so many Ceremonies, should have induc'd them to have laid aside the rest.

3. We think that all useles Monuments of Superstition and Idolatry should be abolish'd. We do not understand for what end these things, that do no good in the Worship of God, and that have been abus'd to Superstition and Idolatry, should be retain'd; and we think that as *Rome* was not built in a Day, and Popish Superstitions and Idolatries did not come in all at once, but by little and little; so the retaining of such things do's only leave open a Gap for their Return. We esteem that a noble Example that is set us in this Matter by *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* 18.

4. Who broke the Brazen Serpent in pieces (tho' it had been formerly useful, and were at first made by God's Command) when it was abus'd to Superstition and Idolatry.

We think that *Hezekiah's* Practice, and our own Opinion, are sufficiently vindicated by those Commands that God gave to the *Jews* to this purpose, *Exod.* 23. 24. and 34. 13. *Numb.* 33. 52. *Deut.* 7. 5. and 12. 2, 3. and therefore if the Doctor would shew that the Dissenters are inconsistent in their Principles; he should shew that they retain some Popish useles Ceremonies, superstitiously us'd by them; and till he do's, all his hard words will not hurt us. *Fancy, Humour, Perverseness, Interest, and such like unwarrantable Methods*, may happen to influence other Men in their Actions besides Dissenters. I could easily dilate upon those Words, if I thought them as much to the purpose in a Controversie, as the Doctor seems to do. I will say this, That the Dissenters have appear'd as little byas'd by Interest as any Men in this Nation; and it is hard to say

what temporal Interest such as the Doctor addresses his Letter to, can propose to themselves; and they must be Men of a perverse Humour indeed, if they can fancy those meaner Circumstances they content themselves with, and all the Contempt and Scorn they are loaded with, or look upon these as eligible on their own Account.

His seventh Assertion is, *That it is unwarrantable for the Common Dissenters to be puff'd up for their Teachers against their Parish Ministers, or for the Dissenting Teachers to countenance and give way to their Followers, being thus puff'd up for them, and that so far as to cause, or at least help to promote and carry on an open Separation.* And this he argues from 1 Cor. 3. 3, 4. & 18. 21. and that I may not lessen the Force of his Reasoning, he Argues, If it was unwarrantable in the Case of real spiritual Gifts, and tho' it proceeded not to an open Separation, it is much more so in the Case of the Dissenters, who do not excel the Churchmen in spiritual Gifts, and who are Separatists besides.

In Answer to which I observe,

1. That if the Dissenters are Ministers of Christ, and the Doctor has as yet alledg'd nothing tolerable to prove the contrary, then this Consequence must fall heavily upon the Dr. and several of his Brethren, who are puff'd up with a Witness against Dissenters, and as much reproves those Churchmen that attend not on our Worship, as it can those Dissenters who attend not upon the establish'd Worship. But the Dr. thinks he has a Right to insult us poor Animals, and even to deride our solemn Worship; for this is plainly his Design in talking of the *Artifice* and the *Knack* of *Extempore* Prayer, &c. Upon which I will only put him in mind of the words of the Reverend Arch-bishop *Tillotson*, who thus animadverts upon such a petulant Humour: "Tho' every Man has a Right in dispute

Sermon on 2 Pet.

3. 3. *being the 2d*
in the Vol. in Fol.

p. 37.

" against a false Religion, to urge it with all its absurd and ridiculous Consequences, as the Ancient Fathers did in their Disputes with the Heathen; yet it is a barbarous Incivility for any Man scurrilously to make Sport with Religion, not with any Design to convince their Reason, but only to provoke their Rage.

2. The Doctor seems to think that 'tis impossible to prefer one Person before another, without being puff'd up for the first against the latter. Which I conceive is not true, nor can I doubt that a Man, without any danger of that Crime, may prefer such a Person as I last cited before the Doctor. It is no Crime to value the Person most that deserves best, provided that a Man does not despise others that are Persons of Merit, tho' inferior

seriour to the former. This was the Fault the Apostle blam'd in the *Corinthians*, that their respect was appropriated to some one particular Minister among them; so as to condemn the rest; and to be divided, tho' not into different Communi- ons, yet into different Parties, headed each of them by some one of their Ministers. And the Dissenters own no such Head but Christ, and avow not any thing, because said by such a Man or by such a Synod, but only as they see it to be the Mind of Christ: and if he thinks them thus consider'd to be a Party, he has his Liberty; others think their Principle is truly Ca- tholick.

I shou'd befar from discouraging Persons value of a Minister, of any Perswasion whatsoever, whose Doctrine was Sound, and Conversation Exemplary, tho' at the same time I can't but judge that those who think the Dissenters Cause Right, and their way of Worship most edifying, are bound stately to join with them.

3. The Doctor seems to lay a stress, on the one hand, upon the Conformists being the Parochial Ministers, and being the Parish's own Ministers; and on the other, upon our Separation.

In answer to the former we say, That in a Popish Country the Parochial Minister is the Schismatick, and the Protestant the Catholick. And 'tis not the Presentation of a Patron, or the Institution or Induction that the Bishop is forc'd to grant, that will give a Person a Right in our Esteem to be Minister of a Congregation, whether they will or no, or that will infer the Obligation of all that live in the Parish to submit to him.

Humane Laws may dispose of Humane Things; the Parish- Church, the Living, &c. but neither do's the Law of Christ; nor the Origin of Civil Government shew, that every one is to refer himself in this Matter to the Magistrate. Nor can I see how a Man comes to be look'd upon, as belonging to a particu- lar Church, in which he never was Baptiz'd, and of which per- haps he never did profess himself a Member.

As to his Argument on the other hand, we deny that the blame of the Separation do's at all belong to us. They have cast out our Ministers, not for refusing Obedience to any one Command and Institution of Christ, but only for refusing to obey some Commands of their own, which our Ministers think they can't do consistently with that Obedience they owe to Christ.

And if the Non-conformist Ministers are in the Right in their Non-conformity, they think that the People are bound to adhere to them; and not to those whose Conformity they

can't but condemn, while perhaps they have an high Value for their Persons and Worth. The Doctor has not meddled here with the Merits of the Cause, and therefore neither shall I, who am only concern'd to enquire into the Strength of his Reasonings.

But, 4thly, The Doctor do's most notoriously wrong us, (if not his own Conscience) when he represents this as taught by the Dissenters, That praying without Form, or *Extempore*, and Preaching without-book, are true and certain Signs of being spiritually Gifted.

I am fully satisfy'd there is no Dissenting Minister in this Kingdom that teaches or believes such a thing. If the Doctor is dispos'd to consider seriously of this Matter, I would recommend a Discourse of Bp. Wilkins concerning the Gift of Prayer, which, for ought I ever heard, the Dissenters are well pleas'd with, and particularly what he says, Page the 3d, *That a Man may have the Gift of Prayer, that has not the Spirit of Prayer*; and as the Doctor's conclusion is not deny'd, we are not concern'd in his Arguments.

His next Assertion is, *That to teach that the Observance of the Feasts or Festivals of our Church is sinful, popish, superstitious or unwarrantable, is the same in effect as to teach that 'tis sinful, popish, superstitious, or unwarrantable to bumble our selves for our Sins, or to return thanks to God on Account of the most signal Circumstances whereby our Redemption was accomplish'd, &c. and consequently is the same as to teach erroneous or false Doctrine.*

And this the Doctor argues; because this not only is, but is acknowledg'd by us to be our Duty. And here he alledges our observing the Fasts and Thanksgivings appointed during the War, and the 5th of November: And he thinks that upon the same Principle that we observe the one, we are bound to observe the other also. Whether the Doctor's Consequence will hold, the Reader will be able to judge when he has heard what our Principle is.

1. The Dissenters think that God himself has appointed one day weekly for the thankful Remembrance of his Mercies, wherein we are bound particularly to bless God for the Great Work of our Redemption by Christ, and for all that Christ has done and suffer'd for us, in order to the accomplishing of it; and therefore they think it needless for Men to appoint and impose other days yearly for the same thing; and they desire here, that they that do so, would produce a fair Commission for their Proceedings.

2. They think they have good reason to believe that God

did

did not intend we should observe any such religious Days as Men have appointed, because they find not that he has given us in his Word any Account of the Time when the things themselves happen'd.

There are but four that we can fix to the exact Time and Day of the Year to which they belong, and they are *Good-Friday, Easter-day, Holy Thursday, and Whitsunday*; and our Knowledge of the precise time of them (they think) was not upon any such account as this, but upon quite other Reasons; and that two of these happening always on a Lord's day, they think them holy enough by virtue of God's Institution, and wonder why any Distinction should be set upon these, since every first day of the Week is holy to the Lord by his own Appointment. But as to others they say, there is nothing that they can find that do's perswade them that they happen'd on the days appointed for the Commemoration of them. And farther they add, that the Arguments by which a great many of them are pretended to be fix'd, viz. that *Zacharias* was High-Priest, and the Time when he executed his Office was the day of Atonement, *Luke* 1, 8. are demonstrably false; and that consequently these Holy-days are plac'd upon a Mistake in the Kalendar, viz. the Annunciation of *Mary*, the Nativity of *St. John Baptist, Christmas, Circumcision*, and the Purification of *Mary*; and that it is next to Demonstration that these things all happen'd at other Times than those assign'd; as has been shewn by a Learned Person of the Doctor's own Communion, referr'd to in the Margin: And therefore they do not understand how they can on *Christmas-day*, and the Sunday after say, with any tolerable Satisfaction, that God gave his only begotten Son to take our Nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin, when they see good Reason to believe that it was at quite another Season of the Year.

Whiston's Harmony,
pag. 161, &c.

3. They don't like the way in which this came into the Church. It is evident, that the Endeavour of accommodating the Christian Religion to the Heathen Customs, was very prejudicial to Christianity; and yet upon the Change of Religion in the Roman Empire, this seems to have been the very Foundation of the instituting these days, and therefore they plac'd them on such days of the Year as were most superstitiously observ'd by the Gentiles, as the same Person observes, Now tho I don't think they design'd it, yet I think they did a

Page 162.

considerable damage to our Holy Religion hereby. This Humour of adorning the Christian Religion with an Heathenish Dress, carried in it this Reflection, that Christianity seem'd to need such a Set-off. And therefore Mr. *Daille* conjectures, That it was this that occasion'd the Christians so early to add new Ceremonies to Baptism, to take off the Prejudice of the *Gentiles*, against the Simplicity of the Institution; whereas Christians should have esteem'd that its

Beauty. I remember the Learn'd Mr. *Joseph Mede* in his excellent Treatise of the Apostacy of the Latter Times, gives us an Account of the way in which the Doctrine

of Devils (that is Saint-worship) crept into the Christian Church; and he do's it in the Words of *Theodoret*. I shall set down one Passage that he alledges out of him to this Purpose. *Theodoret* therefore thus bespeaks the Gentiles. Our Lord God has brought his Dead (viz. the Martyrs) into the Room and Place (the Temples) of your Gods, whom he hath sent packing, and has given their Honour to his Martyrs. For instead of the Feasts of Jupiter and Bacchus, are now celebrated the Festivals of Peter and Paul, and Thomas and Sergius, and other Holy Martyrs. And if their Original was a Mistake, and the effect of them was mischievous, I hope the Doctor will not be angry with us for not observing them: Especially if we have the Primitive Christians on our side. The three first Ages before the Empire become Christian, were evidently in a great measure so. I shall not collect Testimonies,

Just. Martyr, *Apol.* 2.
Dial. p. 38, 47, 59.

as 'twere easy to do. We appeal to *Justyn Martyr*, who speaks not of any other Day as Sacred but the Lord's Day, and who when *Trypho* the Jew told him, That they wonder'd at the Christians who pretended to Piety, That they neither observ'd Feasts nor Sabbaths; do's not answer him, That tho they did not observe the Jewish Feasts, they had many of that kind the Doctor pleads for; but endeavours to shew that the Christians had Reason to observe the first (which he also calls the eighth) Day.

4. As to other Days mentioned by the Doctor, we think we have plain Evidence that the greatest Use that has been made of them, has been to revile and abuse us, and to exasperate the People against us, without any just Cause; and when we see Men fast for Strife and Debate, and

Isa. 58. 4. to smite with the Fist of Wickedness, we desire to be excus'd from joyning with them.

5. We

5. We own that there may be beside what is ordinary and common, some peculiar Reasons and Occasions for Prayer and Fasting, or for Praise and Thanksgiving upon a National Account: which as they do more immediately concern the Civil State, we think it very proper for a Prince to call his Subjects to them, and to appoint Days and Times for them: But then at the same time we don't lodge the Matter wholly in him; for we think, if he shou'd neglect to appoint such Days, the Church may lawfully do it its self; or if he should appoint Days of another nature, or upon an Account which they judge improper and unwarrantable, they are not bound to observe them.

The Case is much the same with that which beset the Conformists at a time within our Remembrance. They gave the Prince a great Liberty and Power in Matters of Religion, and had unmeasurably exalted it to the Destruction of the Foundation of the English Constitution. At length a certain Prince try'd them, and requir'd them to read a Declaration, which contain'd nothing in its self unlawful, nay what they profess'd themselves ready to agree to, and which contain'd nothing contrary to that Sovereign Power of the King which they had preach'd up, and yet tho they allow'd him a Power to appoint them to read Briefs, &c. in the Time of Worship, they refus'd to read this, and assum'd to themselves that Judgment of Discretion, which the Doctor condemns the Dissenters very freely for.

The Doctor would intimate, *That we are at the Bottom more concern'd for Success against the French King, than for the most inestimable Victory obtain'd by Christ over Sin, the Devil, and Death it self: and therefore notwithstanding our outward Preferences, we are inwardly and at the Heart more carnal and worldly minded than others;* and the Doctor plainly infers it from our Practice. The Reader must necessarily see the Consequence, that because we bless God for the Victory obtain'd by Christ upon a solemn Day weekly; and we pray for Success against the French King in the time of this War, upon a solemn Day appointed for that purpose once a Year, or once in 52 Weeks; therefore our concern for Success against the French King, is 52 times as great, as that for Christ's Victory. It would be as much a Banter upon the Reader in us, as 'tis in the Doctor, to argue upon this matter. We openly avow our Principle, that as Christ has lodg'd the Care of his Publick Worship in the Governours of every particular Church, so it belongs to them to order it: and we are well satisfy'd that those that condemn

condemn the Principle will assume a Power to act by it, whenever they find themselves to be generally pinch'd by denying it.

9. The Doctor's next Assertion is, *That every Christian of the Realm is most strictly oblig'd to observe the Rites and Ceremonies of our Church, tho they be Humane Ordinances; therefore that whoever teaches the contrary, is a false Teacher.* And this he argues from *Heb. 13. 17.* because 'tis the Duty of every good Christian to obey the Rulers of the Church in all things not sinful. To which I Answer,

1. That 'tis not true that every good Christian is oblig'd to obey the Rulers of the Church in all things not sinful, unless he means *by not sinful, not sinfully Commanded by them, i. e.* whenever the Rulers of the Church command things which they have no Authority given them to enjoin, they sin by transgressing their Commission; and tho the thing commanded by them were not in it self sinful, a Christian is not bound in Conscience to obey them. 'Tis their Commission from God is the Reason of the Obligation to Obedience, and certainly then the Christians Obligation cannot be larger than their Commission, and the Reason of his Obligation.

2. The Rulers of the Church whom the Christian is bound to obey, are the Rulers of that particular Church to which he belongs; and as to others, no Obligation lies upon him to obey their Commands. Now here here the Dissenters see not any Command that obliges them.

There are but two sorts of Churches mentioned in the New Testament (and to that Rule I resolve to keep till I can find a better) and they are the Catholick Church, and particular Churches, and these only can I look upon therefore as of Divine Institution; a National Church, I find no mention of in the New Testament; and therefore the Authority of the Pretended Rulers of such a Church I don't yet understand, but am ready to be inform'd of: as likewise what is the formal Reason of the Sin of Schism from a National Church, if it is not of Divine Institution. So that were it suppos'd true, that I were bound to obey the Rulers of the Church in all things not sinful, yet this will not affect me, unless they are the Rulers of that particular Church of Divine Institution to which I belong. An Assembly of a different sort from that in which Christ has lodg'd the Power, if they meet together to make Laws, are a Confederacy and Combination, which I see no Reason I have to regard.

3. The Dissenters judge (as has been observ'd) some things impos'd to be sinful ; and therefore according to the Doctor's own Hypothesis, are bound to disobey those Rulers he talks of. Particular Matters brought in by the Doctor under this Head, have receiv'd an Answer before.

10. His next Assertion is, *That whosoever shall teach that to shew Reverences to Churches (particularly by putting off the Hat) when we go into them, whether it be in or out of the time of Divine Service, is Superstitious and Popish, do's give just occasion to have himself Censur'd as a false Teacher.*

The Doctor's Argument for this is, *Lev. 19. 30. and 16. 2. Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and Reverence my Sanctuary ; I am the Lord :* Whence he argues, *That as the former Part requir'd due regard to the Sabbath, or Day sanctify'd and set apart for Divine Worship, so the latter do's as strictly require due regard to the Sanctuary, or Place sanctify'd (i. e. consecrated) or set apart to Divine Worship ;* and therefore 'tis but reasonable to think the latter of perpetual Obligation as well as the former ; with reference to which I say, I am very glad of such News from this Corner, I mean the Perpetual Obligation of the Sabbath ; which some of our Modern Zealots have been desirous to set upon a Level with their Holydays, and to lay all the Obligation to observe it upon the Command of the Church ; which has look'd very much as tho they would have their Power of instituting other Holydays stand or fall with the Observation of the Lord's Day. I am glad too that the Doctor seems so ready to digest that old Jewish Word *Sabbath*. The use of it was formerly a Crime in the Dissenters, and reckon'd among the Instances of their Judaizing. If it will not put the Doctor by his good Disposition, I should say, Sabbaths comprehend there not only the weekly, but all other instituted Sabbaths, of which there was a great number among the Jews. But let that pass.

The Question then is plainly, whether the other Part of the Precept is not of perpetual Obligation also. To which I answer, that 'tis of as perpetual Obligation as the thing will bear ; that is, that as long as God has such a worldly Sanctuary (as is there meant) 'tis to be reverenc'd. The Reason why the Sanctuary was to be reverenc'd, was, because it was the place where God himself did in an especial Manner dwell ; and which he had by his own Institution appropriated to himself as holy. But when the Doctor argues at this Rate, from the Jewish Sanctuary, thus hallowed by the

the Institution and Presence of God, to a Parish Church consecrated by a Bishop, the Dissenters are not quick enough in their Reasonings to follow him. God has now no worldly Sanctuary that we know of, nor do we see it prov'd that he has ty'd his Presence to any particular Place or Thing, but the Hearts and Assemblies of his People: and we think it not hard to conceive of this, tho it should be deny'd that he constantly and in a peculiar manner resides within the Walls of a Parish Church; or tho it should be deny'd that he do's pretently dwell in every Place that the Bishop shall please to consecrate for that end, for we have no Promise of any such thing, and yet without that we cannot pretend to be assur'd of such a Matter. Now then to apply this Matter farther, if a Man go into a worshipping Assembly, there is Good Reason for Reverence, because we know from God's Promise he is present there; but if he go into an empty Church, I can see no Foundation for a Religious Reverence; for if it be out of Respect to God's Presence that he pulls off his Hat in such a Place, he may as well in any other: for I can't from the Scripture see any Foundation for a Difference.

II. His last Instance is, *That he is a false Teacher, that teaches that 'tis not lawful for a Minister to receive Tithes or take Pay for Preaching; or that he is not a true Minister of the Gospel that do's so receive Tithes or Pay.*

I suppose the Doctor had forgot his Title Page, when he wrote this; and that he did not remember that Mr. Dowley was a Dissenting Teacher of the Presbyterian or Independent Perswasion; he certainly took him now for a Quaker: Such are I think the only People that at this day deny the Lawfulness of a Minister's taking Pay; or that judge of Ministers after this rate. Do's not the Doctor know that the Dissenting Ministers live upon the voluntary Contributions of their People? Does he not know that the Government oftentimes Taxes them accordingly, and that by paying those Taxes they have publickly own'd that they do receive Pay? I suppose that the Doctor here had not his Eye upon any Divine Right that Gospel-Ministers have to Tithes, that's quite another Question, which his Arguments do not at all meddle with.

And thus I have consider'd the Doctor's first Head of Accusations, and can safely refer the matter to any Candid and Impartial Reader, whether they amount to any thing or no, or whether the Doctor did not in the beginning endeavour to

raise such Expectations by his Discourse, as he was no ways able to answer and satisfy.

Let us next consider, whether he has any thing better to offer under his other Head of Accusations against us, and that is falseness of Mission; and here he tells us, *That he will set down what is most proper to convince us, that our Ministers have not a true Mission, or (which is the same) that (what is now a-days call'd) a Presbyterian Ordination, is not solid or sufficient to authorize the Person so ordain'd, to teach or to perform any other part of the Ministerial Office.*

Before the Reader proceeds, let him observe that which the Dissenters are well-pleas'd to see, that their Cause must stand and fall with that of all the Protestant Churches: and that the Doctor's Aim is not against the Dissenters only, but that if he proves his Point, all Foreign Protestants are a Parcel of poor, untaught, unbaptiz'd Heathens.

The Doctor then proceeds to lay open the true state of the Question: He tells us, *That the Controversy was occasion'd at the time of the Reformation by some then call'd Presbyters, who took upon them to give Ordination to others; and therefore he tells us, that the Controversy depends upon the State of the Ministerial Office at that time; and in what Sense the word Presbyters was then taken, and with what Ministerial Power such were invested by the Ordination they had themselves receiv'd.* He tells us, *That we own that for several 100 Years before the Reformation, Bishops, Superiour to Presbyters, were invested with the Power of Ordination, and Presbyters were not (he should have said were suppos'd not to be so invested) and therefore he puts this for the true State of the Question: Whether a Person in Holy Orders, tho never invested himself with the Power of Ordination, can nevertheless be truly said to have the just Power of Ordination (or which comes to the same) can nevertheless duly and rightly take upon him to give Ordination to others? and then he thinks he may easily determine, that since no Person can duly act beyond the Commission he receives, or beyond that degree of Authority, wherewith he has been invested; therefore such Presbyters as are mentioned before could not duly ordain, as not invested with the Power of Ordination.*

Thus I have given the Doctor's Reason in Sum, not leaving out any thing of the strength thereof that I know of. In answer to it I say, 1. That 'tis a weakness for a Man to argue at this rate, to wave the Consideration of the Holy Scriptures. The Doctor can't but know that that is the only Rule to

to Protestants, and the Dissenters will not hearken to any other; and therefore his pretending to state the Controversy by the common Sentiments of Men, and not by the Holy Scriptures, is a way that may satisfy him, but never will us. For the Question is not what Men have thought, but whether their Thoughts were consonant to our only Rule; and if they were not, they can be of no importance in the Controversy, because then they must be corrected by the Scriptures; and therefore,

2. I ask the Doctor this plain Question: Were Presbyters at the time that he talks of Officers of Divine Appointment or were they not? If they were not, they are to be discarded, and the Doctor has given up the Cause of the threefold Order, and in course should lose his Benefice. If they were of Divine Institution; then we must by that Institution judge what their Office and Power is, and not by the corrupt Notions of Men in after-Ages.

3. If we are to argue after this rate from the sense of those times, the Argument will wound the Episcopal as well as Presbyterian Ordination: For if therefore a Presbyter at the time of the Reformation could not have the Power of Ordination, because in those times he was not look'd upon to have it, and his Ordainers did not design to give it; the same will hold against the Bishops; that if then, and for several Ages before, they were look'd upon as the Pope's Creatures, and swore Subjection to him at their Ordination, and their Ordainers never design'd to give them a Power to ordain independently on the Pope, they could not then rightly so ordain, and by consequence all Protestant, even Episcopal Ordinations are thus invalid.

4. With reference to the Dissenters, the Presbyters who first ordain'd among them were themselves (generally at least) Episcopally ordain'd; and therefore if we are to judge by the Sentiments of the Ordainers, the Dissenters will come off very easily, because 'tis certain our Protestant Bishops, at the time of the Reformation, did look upon the Offices of Bishops and Presbyters to be the same by Divine Right, as is plain from an Original of those times, a Copy of which *Burnet* has given us in his History of the Reformation, who Apologizes for their Notion, and calls it (to the best of my Remembrance) the Dregs of Popery.

But this has been taken notice of by so many, that I need not add more about it. And this Notion was very prevailing, till Arch-Bishop *Laud* carry'd the matter to that height

that is at present so earnestly pleaded for : Tho' even in his time there were some Bishops otherwise minded. I remember Mr. *Firmin*, in a Piece about Imposition of Hands, tells us of a Bishop then that declar'd, when he ordain'd a Person a Presbyter ; he did it not himself as a Bishop, but as a Presbyter, and he gives such an Account of the Matter, that by what he says, it may be easily known who the Bishop was, tho' he do's not mention his Name. So that these Bishops who were of this Opinion, are reasonably to be suppos'd to design to give to Presbyters as much as we desire.

Now he is so kind as to come to the Scripture, which is the Weapon we desire may be us'd in this Controversie.

Now here I desire the Reader to observe how he argues with us out of the Scripture ; for his pretending to come now to that is but a Blind, for he drops it before he gets to the end of his Argument. Thus he reasons ; *As St. Paul argues, how can they preach except they be sent ? so is it to be argued in the Case, how can they ordain, except they be sent ; namely, to Ordain ?* This is own'd, that no Person can have a Right to Ordain, but those that are sent, that are authoriz'd by God to Ordain. Now the Reader would perhaps expect some solid Scripture-Proof, that God has not sent or authoriz'd Presbyters to Ordain, but he is like to meet with nothing like it. But let us see how the Doctor argues. And he says, *That while we go about to justify the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, by shewing that Presbyters in the New Testament were invested with Apostolical Authority, as to be permanent or standing parts of the Apostolical Office, and consequently were invested with the Power of Ordination, we implicitly grant the main Point, That no one can duly and rightfully ordain without being himself first duly invested with the Apostolical Power of Ordination, and so far (says he) you are in the Right.*

I shall only observe that we don't pretend to Apostolical Authority, speaking properly. The Apostles (we say) were to be look'd upon in a double Capacity ; that of Apostles, and so neither had nor could have any to succeed them : Their other Capacity was that of ordinary Rulers, and so they were Presbyters, and succeeded by such. If he means by Apostolical Authority, only that Authority which belongs to those whom Christ has entrusted with the Government of his Church (whoever they found to be) we then own it, and say that every Presbyter is so invested, and we do not only implicitly, but expressly grant his main Point, as he calls it, that none can lawfully Ordain (I am not concern'd in Cases of utmost necessity) except those
that

that are invested with the Power of Ordination: and now let the Doctor make the best of it. He tells us, that so far we are in the Right, But then your unhappy Error (says he) lies here, that you seem not thoroughly to understand, or to be sufficiently aware (of the promiscuous, and consequently ambiguous use of the Word *Presbyter*, whence it comes to pass) that tho' it be certainly true, that such as are invested with the full Extent of the standing Apostolical Power, are invested with the Power of Ordination; and tho' it should be true, that those call'd Presbyters in the New Testament were thus invested with the full Extent of the standing Apostolical Power, yet both these do not avail you any thing toward the Justification of your Case. That's a little strange, I confess, one would think, that if Presbyters have a Right by the New Testament they can't lose it at Mens Pleasure, and the taking it away should look like a kind of Scarrilege. But before we consider his Reason, we must take notice of his Parenthesis, and let him know that we deny that Promiscuous and Ambiguous Use of the word *Presbyter*, when it is taken for an Office, and he has not yet prov'd it: But now hear his Reason; Forasmuch as what has been ever since the Reformation call'd Presbyterian Ordination, was at first brought up, and has been ever since continued by such Presbyters as were never themselves invested with the Apostolical Power of Ordination, and consequently such an Ordination is not a true and valid Ordination. This is his Scripture-Proof, without one word of Scripture in it; but the same Argument that he us'd before he came to his Scripture-Proof, is trump'd up again; and the sum of the Matter is this, that let the Scripture say what it will of the *Presbyters* Right, yet since Men in after-Ages grew wiser, and were pleas'd to deny its belonging to them, therefore it do's not. The Doctor must learn to manage a Scripture-Argument better, or he is like to work very little upon the Dissenters. The Argument has been consider'd before.

Next he proceeds to answer OUR Arguments from the Scripture; Tho' I must say, if they were no better than his own, he might save himself the Labour.

Before I proceed to consider his Answers, I will mention to him two more Scripture-Arguments, which he has not taken notice of, and upon which I confess I lay a considerable Stress: And they are,

1. That as we read not of the Institution of more than two sorts of fixed Officers in the Christian Church, so 'tis reasonable to suppose there were no more; for certainly since there is neither a distinct Institution of the 3d Order, nor a distinct

Name

same for it, it is unreasonable to believe the pretended Office of self to be distinct. We have the Institution of Bishops or Presbyters in the Apostles, and of Deacons afterwards; but where shall we look for the 3d?

2. Our other Argument is taken from *Acts* 20. 28. from which we argue, not only from the not distinguishing the words Presbyters and Bishops (those that were call'd the Elders of the Church, v. 17. being call'd the Bishops, v. 28. *over which the Holy Ghost has made you Bishops*) but especially we argue from the Apostle's speaking of them as the Rulers of the Church, and committing the Government of the Church to them: which shews plainly that the Church of *Ephesus* was not under the Government of one single Person (or Bishop) but a Plurality, or Presbytery; and this, as Bp. *Beveridge* says, is the true State of the Controversie, whether the Church is to be Govern'd by one or more.

Cod. Can. Eccles. Primit. illustr. 1.2. cap. 11. de Episcopis.

Now let us hear the Doctor.

1. He considers our Argument from *Phil.* 1. 1. *To all the Saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons.* From which we argue that there were but two sorts of Officers in that Church, and that it was govern'd not by a single Bishop.

Now here the Doctor answers, *That 'tis not said the Bishops OF Philippi, but AT Philippi*; and that *none can deny that tho' there could be regularly but one Bishop of Philippi, there might be more at* when this Letter was written, or at least to be deliver'd.

He appeals, *Whether a Letter now* (in time of Parliament) *might not be directed to the Bishops at London and Westminster, tho' there be but one Bishop of London, and none of Westminster.*

To which we answer;

1. That the Epistle is written to a Church, as all *St. Paul's* Epistles are (excepting those to particular Persons) and therefore when he says to the Saints that are at *Philippi*, he is to be understood of the Saints that dwelt there, and constituted that Church; and the words *at Philippi*, strictly belong to the Saints; and when he adds with the Bishop and Deacons, he plainly therefore intends those that did belong to these Saints, or that Church; and indeed if the Doctor's Answer were good, the words *at Philippi* should be put last of all.

2. The Doctor's Supposition is precarious, that there were Bishops of other Churches there when this Epistle was written, or was to be deliver'd, and the only Ground of it is to serve an Hypothesis. The Apostle wrote from *Rome*, that was sufficient

ently distant from *Philippi*, and what Reason can we have to think, that at the time of his writing he knew that there were other Bishops at *Philippi*, since it was not then usual for them to be Non-Residents? If there were any when *Eusebius* left them to go to *Rome*, had not the Apostle Reason to think that they were gone home to their respective Churches, before he could be able to reach to his Journeys end? Farther, there is no reason to believe that this Epistle was to be deliver'd to an Assembly of Bishops call'd together at *Philippi*, because there is no intimation in the Epistle it self concerning any such thing, or any occasion for it. Which makes the Case widely different from that which the Doctor puts, of our Bishops being at *London* to attend in Parliament.

3. Those to whom he writes were *Philippians*; which I argue not from the Title only, because the Authority of that may be justly disputed; but, *Chap. 4. 15.* where he thus bespeaks those to whom he writes. *Now ye Philippians know also, &c.* and I should put the Instance that the Doctor does, I appeal to him whether in an Epistle directed to the Bishops at *London*, it would be proper to say to them, *Ye Londoners*.

4. If the Doctor's Interpretation be true, then the middle Order is wholly left out, and the Apostle must be suppos'd to pass them by without any Notice or Salutation, while he yet particularly mentions the inferior Order of Deacons.

And I ask the Doctor, whether if a Man wrote to the Convocation, and should direct it only to the Bishops and Proctors assembled, &c. the Deans and Archdeacons would reckon themselves civilly and handsomely dealt with?

I desire the Reader to observe, whether our easie and natural Interpretation, does not make this Text better agree with the next, than his precarious and strain'd one will do.

(2.) The next Text the Doctor pretends to answer is, *1 Tim. 3.* where the Apostle only gives Rules concerning Bishops and Deacons, and none concerning Presbyters. And here the Doctor desires it may be consider'd, why Presbyters may not be meant by Deacons, since the word signifies Ministers. I own that the word *διδάσκαλος* does primarily signify a Minister, or Servant; and therefore is us'd in a Great Latitude. But yet there can be no such Reason for the Doctor's, as for the ordinary Interpretation, for these two Reasons.

1. That we have an Account of the Institution of those Officers that we judge denoted hereby, and the Doctor has none at all of those he wou'd pretend; this is what we mainly insist on; and till this is clear'd, such Suppositions are to be look'd upon as wild and precarious.

2. A

As the word *διακονοι* signifies undoubtedly Officers in the Christian Church, so there is very good Reason to understand hereby this particular sort of Officers. The Name, when appropriated to Officers in the Christian Church, does fully agree with the Business, and the first Occasion of those whom we understand by it. They were ordain'd to perform according to the Direction of the Apostles, those inferiour Offices, which could not be conveniently attended to by the Apostles themselves, and so the Name of Deacons, Ministers or Servants, did very well agree to them. Besides, that the chief Part of their Business, and that for which their Office was especially instituted, was to take care of the Poor, and to distribute the Churches Charity among them; and as this was call'd by the Name of *διακονια*, or however with the Addition of *κατασκευαστην*, and they were set over this Business, it seems that hence came the name of *διακονοι* to be us'd to signifie such Officers.

And tho' we do not make any thing to be our Rule but the Scriptures, yet where that appears so clear, we think the Testimonies of such Antient Authors, as *Clemens Romanus*, and *Polycarp*, are not inconsiderable, whom the Doctor may compare together, for the clearing this matter; to whom I am free that he should add *Ignatius* also.

The Doctor adds; 1. *That nothing is contain'd in these Rules concerning those stild Deacons, that is not applicable to Presbyters.* To which I Answer, that that is not sufficient; because according to his own Rule, p. 29. the superior Order includes all its relative inferior Orders, and so the Qualifications requir'd (say I) in the inferior, are much more necessary in the Superior. But then there is another way of arguing, and that is this; If there be somewhat wahting in those Rules concerning Deacons, which may be suppos'd necessary to be given concerning Presbyters, this will be a good Evidence on our side without the other; and such I reckon is that, that a Presbyter should *be apt to teach*; this I find not among those of Deacons, and therefore can't allow the Doctor's Interpretation.

2. *He desires us to produce some Instance where the words Deacons and Presbyters are mention'd together, or by way of Distinction.* To which I answer;

(1.) Let the Doctor do the like by the words Bishop and Presbyter, which must be as much incumbent on him.

(2.) We say we do that which is tantamount; for we shew the distinct Institution of each, and we shew that Bishop and Presbyter are the same in the Stile of the Scripture; and therefore when we produce the Bishops and Deacons mention'd together,

gether, and by way of Distinction, this is equivalent to what he calls for.

3. *He says there is no Reason in Scripture why the word Deacon either 1 Tim. 3. 8. or Phil. 1. 1. should be understood of Deacons properly so called; but that I have answered already.*

I cannot but here take notice to the Reader of an Observation that I have made, that when the Conformists would answer our Arguments, and account for the Texts which we alledge they run into almost as many different ways as there are Writers in the Controversy, which, as it is very common where Men leave the easy and natural Sense of a Text, and are forcing out another, is no small Confirmation to me of our Interpretations. They can't rest satisfied in one another's particular Explications, and yet they expect that we must hold the Point they would secure by them. But to proceed.

(3.) Another Passage he pretends to answer is, *Tir. 1. 5.* where our Argument is this; *Titus was left in Crete to ordain Elders or Presbyters in every City;* these Presbyters the Apostle says must be *blameless*, &c. and the Reason that he gives is this *For a Bishop must be blameless*, where we say that it is plain that the Bishop cannot be of a superior Order: For then the Apostle's Argument would not be valid; but to borrow a Similitude of the Doctor's, it would be as though a Man should argue, that a Batchelor in any Faculty must be so, and so qualify'd, because a Doctor must; and therefore we say, 'tis hence evident the Scripture does not distinguish a Bishop and Presbyter, and that as yet the Conformists have not found there either the Institution or Name of the Office that they argue for.

Now how does the Doctor answer? Why! *He allows the promiscuous Use of the word Bishop, but says this does not prove that the Power of Ordination does belong to Presbyters, or such as in the foregoing Places are stiled Bishops.* This, it must be own'd is strange Doctrine. Does not the Apostle in the Epistle to Timothy, speak of Bishops, as having the Care of the Church of God.

He gives this therefore as a necessary Qualification of a Bishop, *That he be one that ruleth well his own House:* And his Reason is, For if a Man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take care of the Church of God. Upon which

Words Dr. Hammond gives us this Paraphrase; "For sure he that cannot rule a so much less Province, will be unfit to be Governour of the Church of God. Now I think it is no deny

meny'd, that the Power of Government and Ordination go together, and that this latter is contain'd in the former, as a part of the due ordering and governing of the Church. Again in *Titus*, a Bishop is requir'd to be blameless, as the Steward of God, which Dr. Hammond thus paraphrases; * As becomes one that has the Government of God's Family entrusted to him. And I think the Doctor has good Reason for his Paraphrase. For the Use of a Steward was to rule the House, and with the Care of it was he intrusted. Compare *Gen.* 15. 2. & 24. 2. and especially read *Luke* 20. 42. And the Lord said, *Who is that faithful and wise Steward, whom his Lord shall make* (i. e. hath made; compare *Mat.* 24. 45. or else who is qualify'd to be made) *Ruler over his Household, to give them their Portion of Meat in due season.* Which some perhaps could be Iren. lib. 4. c. 44. ready to think belongs to this very Matter, but I only alledge it to clear the Notion of a Steward; and add farther, that hence it is that the Governours of the Church are call'd Stewards, *1 Cor.* 4. 1, 2. and therefore I cannot but subscribe to Dr. Hammond's Paraphrase.

But the Doctor goes on, *Nay in Titus there are some Particulars which afford very good Grounds for inferring that the Power of Ordination did not belong to such an one as is there, ver. 7. stiled a Bishop.* His Argument is (*ad hominem*) thus; That since from the Apostle's only mentioning Bishops and Deacons, *Phil.* 1. 1. & *1 Tim.* 3. we argue that Presbyters must be meant by Bishops. So in like manner, since it is not propable that *Titus* was to ordain only Elders and no Deacons, and by consequence it is not probable that St. Paul should here design to give *Titus* Rules only concerning Elders, and not also concerning Deacons, it is but rational to suppose, that under the general word Bishop, *ver. 7.* are to be comprehended Deacons as well as Presbyters; especially seeing there is nothing in the literal Signification of the words *ἐπίσκοπος* & *διάκονος*, which hinders their being used of the same Persons.

To which I say, 1. That a sufficient Answer has been given to this already, and we have given Evidence that this can't be understood of Deacons, because the Government of the Church is lodged in them: And to that I add, *ver. 9.* where the Apostle requires an Ability by sound Doctrine, *to exhort and to convince Gainsayers*, which answers to that, *1 Tim.* 3. 2. *Apt to teach.* Now since this is not mention'd by the Apostle as a Qualification necessary for a Deacon, but for a

Bishop, 1 Tim. 3. And since this is here made the Qualification of an Elder or Bishop in *Titus*, there can be no Reason (except the serving an Hypothesis) that should persuade us, that by an Elder or a Bishop in *Titus*, is meant a Deacon, or that he is to be included.

2. As to the Doctor's Observation of the Signification of the words ἐπίσκοπος & διάκονος, we own that they may be apply'd to the same Persons, so as that he who is ἐπίσκοπος may be stiled διάκονος, a Servant or Minister of Christ; but then the word is manifestly us'd according to its common Signification and Latitude, and not for any particular kind of Officer in the Christian Church. But we very much question whether the Doctor will be able to prove, that they might both be apply'd to a Person that was only a Deacon, or that ἐπίσκοπος is ever us'd in that Latitude; and yet without this his Observation will not help him.

3. It may be alledg'd that Deacons, though an useful Institution, yet were not absolutely necessary to the Being of a Church; and therefore the Apostle might not mention his ordaining of them. Bishops were absolutely necessary, and as these would have a Power themselves to ordain Deacons, when they had occasion, he might not expect that *Titus* should ordain Deacons, and especially since he had a great deal of necessary Work to do, to go over every City in *Crete*, and to ordain Elders in each, and he had but a little while to stay to do it in: For that he was to return soon to *St. Paul*, is evident from *Tit. 3. 12.* and therefore if he did not expect him to ordain Deacons, the mentioning the Qualifications of them was not so necessary.

4. The next Text he pretends to answer is, 1 Pet. 5. 1. *The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder, (to which may be added, 2 John 1. and 3 John 1.) Hence say your Writers, it appears that the Apostles were Presbyters. Ay certainly, and who ever deny'd it? Then so far we are all well enough, but then see what Terms he puts upon us. But (says he) doth it hence appear (what ought to be prov'd by your Writers, if they would prove any thing to the purpose) that the Apostles were only, or no other than Presbyters, or (which comes to the same) that every Presbyter is an Apostle? If we are requir'd to dispute upon such Terms as these, I can have no Prospect of any end of the Controversy. Must we prove the Apostles were only Presbyters, when we own they were more? We say their Apostleship was that wherein they differ'd from Presbyters; and would he have us prove, that though there was a Difference,*

Difference, yet they were exactly the same? is he not an unreasonable Man, that would put us upon proving that every Presbyter is an Apostle; when we deny that any Person whatever, since the Apostles days, was or can be an Apostle?

If the Doctor thinks he can prove our Modern Bishops Apostles, we will prepare to hear him; but his naked Assertion, that the Apostolical Order is the same with the Episcopal, avails very little. We understand his Comparisons well enough, but he should first prove his Point, and then his Illustration will be pertinent. In short, we say that the Apostles, consider'd in their extraordinary Capacity, were Apostles, and neither had nor could have any Successors: In their ordinary Capacity they are succeeded by all those that have the Government of the Church lodg'd in them: and as there was but one sort of Apostles, so we can see no Reason to make more than one sort of Governours, and desire those who would split their Office (in their ordinary Capacity) into two distinct Offices, (*viz.*) of the Bishops and Presbyters, to give us better Reasons for it, than we can yet meet with; and therefore if there is but one sort of Successors of the Apostles, we are very easy, and think the Texts he speaks to are too clear to be darken'd by the Mist he would cast before the Reader's Eyes. Besides, the Observation that we made in speaking to the other Text, is here to be made also, *viz.* that those Elders were Rulers of the Church, 1 Pet. 5. 2.

5. The last Text is 1 Tim. 4. 14. *With the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery.* Now (says he) the Argument drawn from hence by your Writers, namely, that the Presbytery have the Power of laying on of Hands, or of Ordination, may be very well answer'd from what has been already said concerning the word Presbyter, being promiscuously apply'd to the Apostles. For hence it will follow that by the laying on the Hands of the Presbytery here mentioned, may very well be understood the laying on of the Hands of no other than the Apostles. Should even this be allow'd, it would signify nothing to the Doctor's Purpose. For if they laid on hands as Apostles, and had no Successors in their Apostleship, then there has been no Power of Ordination since their time. If they did not ordain as Apostles, but as Presbyters or Bishops (for the Doctor has not yet help'd us to the Distinction, unless his word may pass for a sufficient Warrant) then all such who succeed them in their Office, must have the Power of Ordination. But (says the Doctor) that hereby is meant the laying on of the hands (at least) of the Apostle St. Paul, is evident from 2 Tim. 1. 6. where the

same Ordination; that is in the fore-cited Place attributed to the Presbytery, is expressly attributed to St. Paul himself. The Doctor lays this down as absolutely certain, and speaks of it with an Air that would persuade a Person that never look'd into these things before, that there was no Objection against it; but one would think he should know, there are some who make the laying on of Hands in these two places cited, two distinct and different things, the one for the giving of the Holy Ghost, which the Apostles might well attribute to himself, it being one of the Peculiar of the Apostleship. And the other they think was in Ordination by the Presbytery. This Objection was certainly worthy the Doctor's notice, and he will do well to remove it clearly out of his way. But now mark his Inference. *Whence it will necessarily follow, that tho the Presbytery mention'd did join with St. Paul in the Ordination of Timothy, yet they did only join with him.* (Ay certainly they did no more, and St. Paul did only join with them, for they both joined together) and that therefore from thence it can never be prov'd that the Power of Ordination did belong to the Presbytery it self then mention'd. But we ask if the Presbytery did ordain, did they it as Persons that had Power, or that had not? and if they had not, what did their Act signify?

Now he subjoins two Considerations, which (he says) tend clearly to evince, that the Power of Ordination did not belong to Presbyters, properly so call'd in the New Testament. I wish the Doctor had set down those places in the New-Testament refer'd to.

1. His first is grounded on *Tit. 1. 5.* the Sum of it is this. If the Presbyters ordain'd by *Titus*, were such as had themselves the Power of Ordaining, what need *Titus* have been led at *Crete* to ordain them Elders in every City? If he had ordain'd such in one or two of the first Cities he came at, they might have ordain'd others,

In answer to which I say,

1. We have shewn before, that they had the Power of Ordination, because they had that of Government; one such Positive Argument is worth forty of the Doctor's Negative Ones.

2. There is a very probable Reason why *Titus* was led even supposing these Presbyters to have the Power, viz. because they were to be fix'd and abide in their Cures, and design'd to have all the Power necessary in their Stations, yet they were not to be employ'd as Itinerants and Evangelists in founding and settling Churches; besides there was a pec-

liar Reason for their not leaving their Flocks immediately upon their Ordination, before they had gain'd their Affections. And I suppose the Doctor will allow, that tho all Presbyters are equal with respect to their Office, yet some by reason of their Age, Standing and Experience, may be more proper to be employ'd in any Work of Moment and Difficulty than others; and this alone might be a Reason why *Titus* was order'd thus to go over the Cities of *Crete*.

3. If *Titus* was not to ordain those that had themselves the Power of Ordination; then I ask the Doctor, (1.) What was to become of them afterwards, when he should be remov'd from them, as he was to be soon (as I shall have occasion to observe afterward) or in Case of *Titus's* Death, and the Death of some of their Elders? Do's the Doctor think that the Apostles, when they founded and settled Churches, did not take care to settle them so, as they might be able to preserve Order among themselves? or do's he think that in such a Place as *Crete*, he design'd there should be none impower'd to ordain, or none but *Titus*? (2.) I ask him what becomes of the old Opinion of the Conformists, that every City should have its own Bishop, if this be true?

2. His other Consideration is this, *That since there are to be found no Rules of Ordination (in any of the other Epistles, tho more in number, but) only in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, who as single Persons presided over, and govern'd the Churches of Ephesus and Crete. Hence it may be rationally inferr'd, That the Doctrine of the Church of England, concerning the Power of Ordination, belonging (not to a Community of Presbyters, but) to single Persons, by us call'd Bishops, it agreeable to the Direction and Practice of the Great Apostle St. Paul, and consequently of Apostolical Constitution.*

In answer to which, I ask what the Doctor means by presided over, or govern'd as single Persons? Do's he mean they did for a little time, while they remain'd there, direct them in Church-Affairs, and ordain them Officers? This is too little. The Doctor would hardly say, that the Bishop of another Diocess ordaining a Person in *London*, presided over, and govern'd the Church at *London*, even tho the Person ordain'd had a *London*-Title. I take it therefore for granted, That the Doctor means that (according as we speak now) they were the Bishops of *Ephesus* and *Crete*, or the fix'd and sole Governours thereof, each in his respective Church. Now this is easily said, but very hardly prov'd, and therefore the Doctor chose the quickest and easiest way to take it for granted.

ed. There is no Evidence of this from the Scripture. The Postscripts to the Epistles are neither Canonical nor Antient, and the very Style of that to *Titus*, when it talks of the Church of the *Cretians*, is quite different from that of the New Testament, which never speaks of the Christians of a whole Country, under the Name of a Church in the singular Number; and since there is no Evidence to the contrary, we have as much Right upon our single word to deny, as the Doctor has upon his to assert, that they were Bishops of these Churches.

But we do not insist upon that, but add,

1. That if *Timothy* were, according to the Postscript, the first Bishop of *Ephesus*, the Apostle would not have committed the Government of the Church to the Elders, as he did, and that when *Timothy* was by; compare the 4th, 17th, and 28th Verses of the 20th of the *Acts*.

2. If *Timothy* had been the Bishop of *Ephesus*, his Duty would have been to reside there, and then it is not probable that the Apostle would (at the same time mention'd before: Compare 1 *Tim.* 1. 3. with *Acts* 20. 1.) have besought, but rather enjoin'd him to abide still at *Ephesus*. Nor is it probable that he would have afterwards call'd him from his Cure, as he did, 2 *Tim.* 4. 21.

And the like may be said with reference to *Titus*, That had he been, according to the Modern Way of speaking, the Bishop of *Crete*, it is not likely that the Apostle would have so soon call'd him away as he did, *Tit.* 3. 12. or that he would afterwards have sent him another way to *Dalmatia*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. And I think the Apostle speaks not as tho he design'd to settle *Titus* Bishop of *Crete*, when he says, *That for this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou mightest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City.* This looks as tho he were left only upon a particular Exigence, and was to stay there no longer than till he had taken care of it.

3. There is no reason to think that *Timothy* or *Titus* were to ordain alone. *Timothy* had the Elders or Bishops of *Ephesus*, mention'd in the 20th of the *Acts*, with him, and *Titus* had *Zenas* and *Apollos*; and tho the Charge is given to *Timothy* and *Titus*, as they were to be the Principal and Leading Persons; yet since by comparing other Places we find that Ordinations were perform'd by a Plurality, and especially since Christ did not appoint his Apostles to act singly, but in Conjunction, it is but reasonable to think that *Timothy* and *Titus* acted in like manner.

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One Objection more the Doctor answers, and is free upon the matter in his Reproaches, &c. which, as we are pretty well us'd to, we have learn'd to despise.

The Objection is this, *That Episcopal Government, as maintain'd by the Church of England, is only an Effect of humane Pride and Ambition, and no other than a piece of Popery.* I will not set down the Doctor's Answer at length, but will give the Reader my own Sentiments about the Objection, and his Answer in these following things.

1. Then I do not think that all Episcopacy is either Popish or Unscriptural. There is an Episcopacy that I am ready to plead for, and I have some Design to do so; and I verily believe, That neither those call'd *English Presbyterians*, nor *Independents*, will be against a Precedency of one before the rest, of the same Order, in a particular Church.

2. 'Tis the Difference or Superiority of the Order of Bishops that I deny to be founded upon Scripture; and the Doctor is so favourable as to say as little as I could desire to confute my Opinion; or, if he please, to take the Question according to Bp. *Beveridge's* stating it: I deny that the Government appointed by Christ, or his Apostles in every Church, is Monarchical. And here both Presbyterians and Independents also, however the Doctor represents and insults them, join with me. For the Independents give the People too much Power, as that the Pastor cannot act against the Vote of the Majority of the People, and therefore is far from being acknowledg'd Lord Paramount.

3. That so long as I am convinc'd that the Episcopacy I plead against is not according to Scripture, I am not much concern'd which way it came in, tho the Doctor's way of Reasoning do's not much move me: For tho the Danger of the most eminent Station in the Church, might deter Persons from affecting it in times of Persecution, yet that do's not hinder the Workings of a natural Inclination in Men, to grasp at Power (which has a Spice of Pride and Ambition in it) when they are actually got into such a Station. Suppose Men were afraid of being Bishops, could there be no Temptations to them to enlarge their own Power when they were so? I desire the Doctor to consider, whether he can find nothing of this Nature in Pope *Victor* and *Stephanus*, or whether the Respite they sometimes had, might not let loose a Fission, which Persecution perhaps chain'd up; or whether, notwithstanding his Argument, he has not heard of one *Dionysius*, who lov'd to have the Pre-eminence; or of *Novatian*,

tian, that got himself to be made a Bishop, and who had many Bishops of his own way that succeeded him.

4. I make no doubt, but that as he that had the Precedency in any Church, was ordinarily a Person of most Eminence and Worth; so this, and his having the chief hand in managing Affairs, gave him Advantage to enlarge his own Authority; and I think the farther we come from Scripture-Times, the more we may observe that Enlargement.

5. I cannot but think that the vast Extent of Diocesses made the lowest Species of Churches, with a Bishop at the Head of them, as sole Pastor of all Christians therein, is contrary to Scripture, Antiquity, and Reason it self. Let the Doctor call it what he will, I ask him, Whether he can blame a Man for saying the Pope is capable of being universal Pastor; and yet say himself, That a Man may be capable of the Pastoral Care of a Million of Souls in *England*, and of a great many thousands beside in several Places of *America*?

6. I delight not in reproachful Speeches; and therefore should not much affect Charges of Popery; but only I will tell the Doctor, that he would have done his Cause more Service, by shewing plainly that Bishops, with such Diocesses as the English are, the Bishops Courts, and their manner of Proceeding, have a better Platform, than he has now done it by such a ridiculous Discourse of a *Protestant Grandfather being the Son of his Popish Grandson*.

By Popery, such Men as the Doctor talks of, mean the whole System of Corruptions own'd and avow'd by the Church.

They don't think themselves oblig'd to examine, whether the thing they esteem Popish, were in being before some Point of Popery were started, but only whether they are Corruption or no; and whether if they are, they are held by the Popists. I will for once try the Doctor.

He tells us Popery did not begin in the World till about two, or about three hundred Years after the Reign of Constantine the Great: This brings us therefore to about the Year 600; or, I suppose, the remarkable 606, for the beginning of Popery: I ask the Doctor, Whether the worshipping of Saints will be allow'd by him to be a piece of Popery. It has hitherto, I think, been so acknowledg'd; and yet if he will please to look into Mr. Mede, in the place I cited before he will find that it was maintained by the famous Theodorus who was a Bishop soon after the Year 420.

I hope I have now fully satisfy'd the Reader, that the Doctor has nothing material to say against the Ministry of the Dissenters; and the Reader will without my enlarging, see that his Admonition in the Conclusion is impertinent.

Their Ordination is every whit as valid as Episcopal, and there is not one Scripture Qualification of it that is wanting.

If the Doctor thinks he may lay any stress upon our places of Worship, as not so fine and handsome, we are ready to defend our Practices, and are well satisfy'd, that a Worship consonant to the Scripture-Rules, will be pleasing to God, tho the Circumstances of the Worshipers do prevent their having the Place either so beautiful or convenient as might be desir'd.

It is not the Place, tho consecrated with all the Ceremonies, and by all the Bishops in the World, will make a Person's Service more acceptable to God. 'Tis not one place or another that God now regards, but he seeks such to worship him, as worship him in Spirit and in Truth, and with such he is well pleas'd, however the Doctor, and Men of his narrow Principles should be offended.

If the Doctor apprehends the Mischief of Schism so great, and is not mistaken, we think we have reason to pity the Schismatics; and add moreover, that tho we own that any Sin, and consequently Schism, is in it self of a Destructive, Damning Nature, yet we take not upon us to judge the Conformists eternal State, as they many of them do very freely ours. We know they have a merciful God to deal with, who knows how to make Allowances for the Prejudices of Education, or the Byass that the Vogue of the World and Interest do often, in some measure, give to Men that are yet truly sincere and upright.

The Doctor would fain have us own and submit to the Charge of Schism, as may be seen by his Postscript; but we lay the Charge is utterly groundless, and if any of us hold that Principle, *That Separation from a Church is no Schism or sinful Separation, so long as 'tis not accompany'd with Uncharitableness*; It is not from any Suspicion that the blame of the Separation (and so the Guilt of Schism) lies on our side; nor is it from any Tenderness to our selves, but if any thing sways us, 'tis rather a Willingness to think the most favourably of our Brethren. And if the Doctor is offended at our charitable Sense, and resolved to mistake it, we cannot help it. I confess, for my own part, tho I desire my Charity may be as extensive as reasonably it may be, yet 'tis not built upon
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that Notion which the Doctor here speaks of, which yet acknowledge is espous'd and urg'd in the present Case by some Dissenters; but rather upon what I mention'd before, *viz.* the Goodness of God, who will put a favourable Construction upon and mercifully pardon the involuntary Mistakes that good Men are liable to.

As to the Places of Scripture the Doctor cites, they are general, and are easily apply'd as a Man pleases. But I have shewn that the Doctor has not said any thing that will bear him out in applying them to us. I shall make no other Return to them, than by proposing to his serious Consideration a few Questions in the Words of Iren. in the late Bp. *Stillingfleet*: "What Ground can

"there be, why Christians should not stand upon the same
 "Terms now, which they did in the time of Christ and his
 "Apostles? Was not Religion sufficiently guarded and fenced
 "in then? Was there ever more true and cordial Reverence
 "in the Worship of God? What Charter has Christ given the
 "Church to bind Men up to more than himself has done? or
 "to exclude those from her Society, who may be admitted in
 "to Heaven? Will Christ ever thank Men at the Great Day
 "for keeping such out from the Communion of the Church
 "whom he will vouchsafe not only Crowns of Glory to, but
 "may be *Aureola* too, if there be any such things there? When
 the Doctor has consider'd these things duly, he may better determine whether his Time and Pains spent in misrepresenting, censuring and condemning us, were not likely to turn to a more comfortable Account to him, if spent in endeavouring to allay the Heats, and mend the Tempers of those, who by their Impositions have caus'd such Differences and Distractions in the part of the Christian World. I can see a truly noble Charity in Men that plead for abatement to be made, in things they confess unnecessary, to such as profess they esteem them sinful; and who, tho' they can satisfy themselves of the Lawfulness of the impos'd Terms of Communion, yet seek for a Relaxation of them, for those that cannot. But I defy the Doctor to find me out a Jew, Papist or Turk, that has not Charity enough to equal what (for ought I can find) the Doctor is yet arriv'd to. I mean to persuade Men to be of his own Opinion, while he threatens them with nothing less than Damnation, if they are not.

I am not much concern'd at the Doctor's second Postscript, I have not the Pamphlet by me that he pretends to cite for our Opinions formerly. I observe his scrupulous Conscience will

not suffer him, tho' in a Citation, to say the *Lancashire Ministers*, or *London Ministers*, but instead of Ministers, he takes the Liberty to put in Teachers, and so he styles himself in the Title Page a Minister, and Mr. D. a Dissenting Teacher. Suppose we should use this Language, and only call the Doctor and his Brethren the Parish-Teachers, I believe the Doctor would not be well pleas'd. In a free Age this Narrowness of Spirit exposes a Man to scorn.

But now let it be suppos'd, that with more Fairness he cites the Body than the Title of the Book. I will tell the Doctor, that if the Dissenters spake too hardly against Toleration at that time, Men of the Doctor's Principles have very thoroughly convinc'd them of their Mistake. 'Tis one receiv'd Principle of the Dissenters, that no Man or Body of Men are to be the Standard of Truth, and that their Notions are not to be enslav'd to the Sentiments of those whom they most value. And if they have so profited by the Severities they have endur'd, and those irrefragable Arguments by which the Rights of the Subject have been of late Years clear'd and vindicated, as to understand that Matter a little better, why should the Doctor censure them? or why them alone? Do they not herein agree with the Sentiments of the whole Nation, except the Votaries for Bigottry, and a French Government? But if the Dissenters Principles and Practises are so occasional as the Doctor would represent them, I beseech him to tell me why they should stand in need of any Toleration at all? Why do they not so serve themselves of them, as to fall in intirely with the Establishment? What was it that bewitch'd them to endure a Series of Sufferings for above 20 Years together? What did they propose to themselves to get by standing out against the severest Acts of Parliament, or by exposing themselves to the Fury and Clamours of an angry Party, that had got the Power on their side? Why did they not improve this Artifice of shifting their Principles to secure their Benefices; as we have seen a great many Churchmen, who chang'd their Notions of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance, at the very nick of time when they must have been otherwise ejected?

Or if the Doctor thinks they have no Principles at all, why did they not subscribe and swear at the same rate as a great many took the Oaths to King *William*, and hated him and his Government when they had done, and still revile his glorious Memory?

'Tis the Glory of the Dissenters that they so long suffer'd among other things for refusing to declare, that 'tis not lawful upon

upon any Pretence whatever, to take up Arms against the King,
Or A Declaration, which if it had been more than occasionally
believ'd, subscrib'd and kept, would have ruin'd this Nation.
And if the Dissenters were in the right, in refusing to subscribe
that Declaration, and therefore that Point of Conformity is now
justly remov'd, I would ask by the way, whether they were
Schismatics while it was requir'd?

That, Sir, I have now gone through the Doctor's Letter.
If the rest of his Writings against us are of a piece with this, they
are like to do us very little harm, unless the Martial Air
with which he writes, should make amends with a y for the
Weakness of his Arguments. I hope 'twill be no Offence to
declare that it does not at all convince,

S I R,

Your Hearty Friend and Servant.

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